

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. FOLLOWING ARTICLE BY MATTHEW RIDGWAY APPEARED ON OP-ED
PAGE OF NEW YORK TIMES TODAY, APRIL 4, 1974.

2. PITTSBURG - "DETENTE," I BELIEVE, POSES THE POTENTIALLY
GRAVEST DANGER TO OUR NATION OF ALL THE PROBLEMS WE FACE.
WHETHER IT IS TO PROVE A SIREN'S CALL TO LURE US TO OUR
DESTRUCTION, OR THE FIRST LONG STEP TOWARD DEFUSING THE
TERRIBLE THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAREFARE AND WORLDWIDE HOLOCAUST,
NO MAN CAN TODAY PREDICT WITH ANY ASSURANCE.

3. BUT WHAT ANY REASONING PERSON CAN CLEARLY PERCEIVE IS THE
DISTINCT POSSIBILITY THAT TREATIES CAN BE ABROGATED OR IGNORED,
THAT SOLEMN UNDERTAKINGS BY THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP CAN BE DELIB-
ERATELY FLOUTED OR REPUDIATED AND THAT AN OVERNIGHT REVERSION
TO THE HARD-LINE POLICIES OF A FORMER SOVIET GOVERNMENT CAN
TAKE PLACE.

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4. AGAINST THESE POSSIBILITIES THIS COUNTRY MUST HAVE AMPLE SAFEGUARDS, FOR WE ARE DEALING NOT WITH THE FATE OF OUR OWN NATION, THOUGH THAT MAY WELL BE WHAT WE ARE DOING, BUT WITH THE FATE OF A CIVILIZATION, THE FATE OF THE FUNDAMENTALS ON WHICH OUR NATION AND THE FREE WORLD HAVE BUILT THAT CIVILIZATION THROUGH TWO MILLENNIA.

5. WHAT MUST BE DONE IS TO CRITICALLY AND COLDLY EXAMINE AND ANALYZE EVERY FACET OF THIS PROBLEM THROUGH THE WIDEST PRACTICABLE PUBLIC DEBATE AND THEN TO MAKE BASIC DECISIONS AND FORMULATE POLICY GUIDELINES.

6. FORTUNATELY, IT APPEARS THAT AN ASSESSMENT OF WHERE WE MAY BE GOING, FOR WHAT REASONS, AND FOR WHAT GUARANTEES OF NATIONAL BENEFITS, IS BEING MADE, CONSTRUCTIVELY, BY HIGHLY QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS, IN AND OUT OF GOVERNMENT, WHOSE INTELLECTUAL HONESTY, INTEGRITY, COMPETENCE AND DEVOTION TO OUR COUNTRY COMMAND RESPECT.

7. THERE CAN BE NO REAL LESSENING OF TENSIONS, EXCEPT IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF MUTUAL TRUST. SUCH TRUST DOES NOT EXIST. POSITIVE ACTION, NOT MERE WORDS, BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WILL BE REQUIRED OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD TO CREATE SUCH TRUST.

FOR AMERICA'S PART, I FAIL TO SEE HOW IT CAN EXIST IN VIEW OF THE UNRELIEVED EVIDENCE OF THE ACTIONS TAKEN AND THE COURSES PURSUED BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT OVER THE LAST FIFTY YEARS, THE FREQUENTLY EXPRESSED FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE OF SPREADING ITS FORM AND CONCEPT OF GOVERNMENT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD - IN SHORT, OF ITS AIM OF WORLD DOMINATION.

8. WOULD IT BE IN OUR NATIONAL INTEREST TO EXTEND LONG-TERM CREDITS TO THE SOVIET UNION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING OF SIBERIAN OIL AND GAS RESERVES IN EXCHANGE FOR SOVIET PROMISES TO LET US SHARE THEM AT FAIR PRICES YEARS HENCE; TO FURNISH TECHNOLOGY THAT WE HAVE DEVELOPED AND THAT THE RUSSIANS LACK AND EAGERLY SEEK; TO CONTINUE TO PARE OUR MILITARY STRENGTH WHILE THE SOVIET UNION CONTINUES TO AUGMENT ITS OWN IN THE NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL FIELDS, AS IT HAS BEEN DOING FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS; TO CONSENT TO THE PRESENT UNCLASSIFIED

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DISPARITY IN NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES BROUGHT ABOUT BY OUR 1972 AGREEMENT ON LIMITING STRATEGIC WEAPONS; TO AGREE TO A COMMON PERCENTAGE IN THE REDUCTION OF ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE, LEAVING THE SOVIET UNION IN ITS PRESENT POSITION OF GREATER STRENGTH - ANOTHER SOVIET PROPOSAL?

9. THESE ARE HARD QUESTIONS OF IMMENSE SIGNIFICANCE TO US AND TO THE FREE WORLD. THEY DEMAND HARD THINKING.

10. UNDER THE VISION OF THOSE WHO ESTABLISHED OUR FORM OF GOVERNMENT, MANKIND'S FIRES OF IMAGINATION WERE KINDLED. THEY BURNED WITH AN INTENSE FLAME AND SPREAD OVER MUCH OF THE WORLD. THEY HAVE YET TO BE EXTINGUISHED. BUT NOW IN THE CONTINUING EROSION OF MORALS AND ETHICS, AND IN THE APATHY AND MUDDLED THINKING OF MANY OF OUR OWN PEOPLE TODAY, THEY HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO BURN DANGEROUSLY LOW.

11. WE NOW HAVE BEFORE US IN OUR GREATEST HOUR FOR TWO CENTURIES, AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THE WORLD WHETHER WE ARE DETERMINED TO KEEP THOSE FIRES BURNING; WHETHER WE SHALL BE FOUND TOO LACKING IN INTEGRITY, TOO WEAK IN MORAL COURAGE, TOO TIMID IN PLANNING, TOO IRRESOLUTE IN EXECUTION TO SET BEFORE ALMIGHTY GOD AND MANKIND AN EXAMPLE OF THOSE PRINCIPLES, FAITHFULLY ADHERED TO, ON WHICH OUR FOUNDING FATHERS STAKED "THEIR LIVES, THEIR FORTUNES, AND THEIR SACRED HONOR" - WHETHER WE WILL SHOW THE WORLD AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT IN OUR HEARTS WE KNOW IS ETERNALLY RIGHT.

12. IN THIS BICENTENNIAL ERA, THE CHOICE IS OURS TO MAKE.
(END TEXT) MATTHEW RIDGWAY, NOW A RETIRED GENERAL, SERVED AS SUPREME COMMANDER OF ALLIED POWERS IN BOTH EUROPE AND THE FAR EAST AND WAS ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF FROM 1953 TO 1955
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